

# Self-disclosure, gender, and communication assignment

[Sociology](#)



Self-disclosure basically means or refers to a form of communication whereby one communicates the hidden self to other people or to another person. According to Matthew McKay, Ph. D., Martha Davis, Ph. D., and Patrick Fanning, Self-disclosure is composed of four elements: Open Self, Blind Self, Hidden Self and Unknown Self. Self disclosure can be seen as a strategy of taking the hidden self to the open self or sharing information about you with others which they never knew about you.

Disclosing some or ones information about oneself can help establish meaningful relationships as other people can learn or now know why you behave the way you do so it helps people know you better and almost never judge you in some of the things you do. This way we interact or communicate peacefully without misunderstanding each other in any way improving the establishment of meaningful relationships in our lives.

By self disclosing we can learn a lot about ourselves as well, get to discover new things we never knew about ourselves for example one can find out that he/she is more of a creative thinker/right brained than a critical thinker/left brained in situations whereby one is in a group doing assignments etc. This contributes more to self knowledge because we also get to know both our weaknesses and strengths and learn how to be at our best and know how to avoid some of our weaknesses.

People can also benefit from self disclosing by gaining new perspectives about themselves. Self-disclosure offers many rewards, according to authors McKay, Davis, and Fanning , we tend to get to know ourselves to an extent that we are known. According to Randy Siegel keeping quite or being silent

is a form of disclosing information about ourselves to others. As people or human beings we love or enjoy the feeling of closeness with others, and relationships with others which can transform us in positive ways, according to Derlega, V. "Developing Close Relationships," Self disclosure can help us to improve our communication as people as disclosure encourages disclosure and also helps us with active listening skills. Furthermore self disclosure improves communication because we tend to understand each other's messages or ideas addressed towards each other. We experience more or a lot of self disclosure at the early stages of new relationships and experience intimate or extreme self disclosure at later stages of our relationships.

In most cases we find out that unlike men women use self disclosure as a way of strengthening their relationships and improving communication between them and other people. Also according to Randy Siegel by choosing to share ourselves, we have a better chance of communicating our authentic selves and making true connections. Self disclosure can also boost someone's self esteem which will help him in coping within the society or simply with his or her coping abilities.

Since self disclosure encourages Disclosure, it can help other people start meaningful and intimate relationship with other people in the society. People tend to feel better around you after you have disclosed certain information about you and wanting to know more about you. According also to Randy Siegel's article, Self disclosure offers many rewards, according to authors McKay, Davis, and Fanning. They include increased self-knowledge (we know ourselves to the extent we are known), closer and more intimate

relationships, and improved communication (disclosure encourages disclosure. Sometimes when we disclose or self disclose information about ourselves can help greatly with our coping abilities as we get to somehow fit in some social networks we once were not able to be a part of. It helps us cope with our own selves meaning we get to understand why some of the things in our lives are happening to us and self disclosure can help us cope as knowing once differences and similarities we get to understand each other and live together in peace and harmony which boost also our relationships with other people we live around or interact with on daily basis.

With self disclosure helping on improving on one's self knowledge we get to know our limits in almost everything we do or encounter in our day to day activities which helps us perform at our best and never overwork ourselves because we know how far one can go or can withstand or can take how long doing a certain task or job which also contributes to coping abilities.

Since self disclosure encourages self disclosure it makes or improves and promotes good relationship with others as you get to know other people and helps you know how people react to some situations so one can easily avoid saying or doing something that the other person or friend of yours is not going to like or helps you know when to say something and how to say it so that you maintain a good healthy relationship with other people or friends.

While Self Disclosure has many rewards it also has its dangers.

Self disclosing can cause people to reject you in their lives and if possible shut you out completely out of their lives for the rest of their lives and also scold you for disclosing information about yourself. We can find ourselves

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having had disclosed crucial information about ourselves without even realizing it. It also happens that we find out about it at a very late stage and cannot do anything about it or even take back what you disclosed because communication is irreversible.

For example let's say someone or a friend, mother or father bought you something and then you disclose crucial information to them they may find it hard to really give you the gift they wanted to give you because of what you have told them or disclosed to them. Being shut down or out of the personal and social network can dramatically drop someone's self esteem and that person will develop a sense of not belonging or loneliness and this can contribute to someone getting low marks, coming up with retarded ideas or non-value/high quality or fresh ideas which can also result in material loss.

Self disclosure itself can be difficult to approach or do as one never knows the outcome of disclosing the hidden self to the open self. Self disclosure can be helpful or damaging to the relationship and it is difficult to determine when self disclosure is appropriate. It is important to examine why self disclosure would be appropriate in a particular situation. The person disclosing information should use appropriate skills to gain accurate understanding of the person's experience before offering disclosure to him or her.

If he or she offers self disclosure and it is not relevant to the other person's experience, they may feel that he or she is not listening or does not care.

When disclosing people should consider the other person's reaction towards what he or she is going to say before disclosing any information because one

may find out that he or she disclosed information that can harm the listener's feelings in some way and this may lead to breaking up of a relationship.

Clearly self disclosing can bring about negative experiences with others which can lead also to feeling that telling others about how you feel inside or what you think of something is just too risky and unnecessary, which may also lead to social rejection as people would think that you are not responsible enough to be relied on in most cases just because people do not know you and feel insecure around as they never know what could happen or what you can do. Sharing certain information can lead or contribute to possible attacks such as being lawfully attended to especially in Botswana in the case of gay relationships which is not allowed specially for the men in Botswana it is so far impossible to get married to another man or woman it is seen as crime and also a sin according to the bible. Self Disclosure can be risky as one might get social rejection after disclosing for example his or her health status especially when one has or is infected by HIV/Aids virus, people tend to feel afraid to talk to such a person or to get close to such a person with certain health status they fear or a afraid of, so sometimes social rejection can be caused by such information.

At the end we can finally say or conclude that self disclosure has more rewards than dangers even though the dangers may be permanent, so one needs to be aware of the dangers or risks of disclosing and resist pressure to self disclose while having personal conversations with his or her friends and

family to avoid the severe consequences and damages of self disclosure.

## REFERENCES

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